

**COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA**  
**Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**  
**October 2, 2003**

Attendees:

Ken Currey	Greg Gnesios	Mel Lloyd
John Foster	Bob Silbernagel	Raul Morales
Doralyn Genova	Lori Buck	

**Greetings and Introductions**

Vice Chairman Bob Silbernagel officially called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m. Greg Gnesios, manager of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, provided an update on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) activities.

**BLM Update**

The Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/EIS) is expected to be released by October 17, with the 90-day public comment period ending January 31, 2004. An informational postcard was mailed in September to individuals on the CCNCA mailing list. Those who preferred to receive a hard copy of the DRMP were asked to notify Jane Ross, the planning team leader. The document will be available for review by CD ROM and online at the project web site as well.

The BLM Colorado state director was briefed on September 9 and subsequently approved the DRMP/EIS.

Greg mentioned the recent visits to the CCNCA by both BLM Director Kathleen Clarke and the Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton, noting that the planning process has been positive. Greg looks forward to a positive public comment period with the public recognizing the need to allow for future growth and its consequential impacts, yet balance that with minimal change in implementing the plan.

Data is currently being input for fiscal year 2005 projects and, if funding is obtained, initiating these projects would begin implementation of the plan's proposed actions. The CCNCA has received base funding for FY 2004, and funding for some cultural/paleontological projects looks promising.

Doralyn Genova confirmed that Mesa County is planning to work with the BLM in developing open space with revenues generated from selling various inholdings.

Greg reported that the city of Fruita's purchase of Snooks Bottom was finalized and portions of the area will be rehabilitated and opened to the public in about 2 years. The BLM hopes to continue developing Opal Hill, which is adjacent to Snooks Bottom and a key access to other trails and recreational areas. This year's Public Lands Day project focused on building a stone base around Opal Hill.

BLM Interpretive Specialist Wade Johnson was instrumental in obtaining funding for trail improvements on the Trail Through Time in Rabbit Valley. Access for the disabled visitor and an alternative to the county road are being planned. Funding for CCNCA portal signs, which will meet National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) criteria, has also been obtained.

Greg announced that the city of Fruita has awarded the BLM a mini grant for providing CCNCA rack cards to local businesses in the area. A new slick brochure for the CCNCA is nearing completion as well.

Greg indicated that BLM would schedule an open house during the 90-day public comment period. Bob Silbernagel suggested, and other Advisory Council members present agreed, that scheduling after the holidays would be better than the proposed November-December dates.

Greg explained that Jane's role in the CCNCA planning process would be changing as she begins working on other BLM planning projects. Gene Arnesen, BLM outdoor recreation planner, may be more involved with the final plan.

Three interpretive signs and their bases, valued at approximately \$3,000, were vandalized in the Fruita Paleontological Area. Increased presence by both BLM staff and friends organizations will be critical to discouraging future vandalism.

The Northwest Resource Advisory Council is holding a meeting in November, and the agenda includes a briefing on the CCNCA draft RMP/EIS.

Although there was no quorum at this evening's meeting, those Advisory Council members present felt that next year's meeting schedule could go to a bi-monthly schedule (continuing with the first Thursday of the month), if others agreed. Those present agreed that the November 6 meeting would be canceled and the next Advisory Council meeting would then be December 4. Next year's meetings will be published in the *Federal Register* later this year, with February 5 as the first meeting in 2004. Members would instead use the time to assist the BLM in mobilizing the working groups in an effort to form a CCNCA friend's group.

Greg stated that it is important for the Advisory Council to also assist BLM staff in creating an identity for the CCNCA. Progress is being made but people tend to recognize only parts of the area but not the whole. Ken Currey suggested fence signing to identify CCNCA boundaries.

Greg added that the proposed Public Lands Center is moving forward, with an interim site located in the Fruita Welcome Center. The U.S. Forest Service, Colorado State Parks, BLM, city of Fruita and the National Park Service/Colorado National Monument are working together on this project. The Dinosaur Diamond Scenic Byway and city of Fruita will share space and, until the center can be staffed, an interactive DVD kiosk will be available for visitor information.

Greg asked the members present to think about field trips and, rather than a river trip, a cultural field trip to McDonald Creek/Rabbit Valley, sometime in November, appealed to everyone. Greg indicated that he would invite BLM's Archaeologist Mike Berry on the outing. Bob Silbernagel agreed to discuss the proposed trip with Chairman Warren Gore.

John Foster reported that the Mygatt-Moore Quarry, located near the Trail Through Time in Rabbit Valley, produced a few interesting fossils this summer. Unfortunately, two important finds were stolen from the quarry in separate incidents.

Greg confirmed that dog owners are responding positively to the dog waste removal system installed by the BLM and are cleaning up after their pets at the Devils Canyon Trailhead. Greg added that, with increased use in the Fruita Front Country, the BLM may need to initiate a garbage removal program.

Another planned initiative is public outreach at area schools in an effort to decrease vandalism.

There are no developments in BLM's effort to acquire the Joufflas inholding within the CCNCA.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment and the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.